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THE MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

ST. PAUL, MINN., Jan. 28, 1871.

We take this method of informing our friends and correspondents of the designs, present condition and wants of the Minnesota Historical Society:

Origin and Organization.—The Society was organized in 1849, and incorporated by an act of the first Territorial Legislature, approved Oct. 20, 1849, thus being the first literary institution organized in the Territory; and its "Library," then only a few volumes, was the first ever established in Minnesota. The Society was instituted by a few gentlemen, who were among the pioneers of the Territory, and had its origin in the conviction felt by them, "that the unexampled growth and development of the Northwestern States, made an unusually strong demand upon the present generation, for the adoption of measures that would insure a faithful record of their primitive condition, and of the marvelous transformations they have undergone since their first settlement. The few interesting traces to be found of the pre-historic race or races that once inhabited this continent, were fast disappearing. The Indian tribes, our immediate predecessors in the occupancy of the country, were also passing away, and with them the traces left by their ancestors, and all traditions of the more recent events in their own unwritten history. The imperfect records of the deeds performed, privations endured, and conquests made by the heroic men who were the pioneers of the present civilization, were being lost. And even the yet more wonderful achievements of the men of to-day, whose subjection of vast areas of wild lands, immense forests of timber, and inexhaustible mineral resources to the uses of civilized life; whose construction of public works and opening of continental highways, and whose building of villages and cities, with countless institutions of every kind, have been without a parallel in the history of the world—these would all be lost unless an institution were formed, whose chief end it should be to collect and record or publish the same."

Objects.—The objects of the Society, therefore, as set forth above, and expressed in its constitution and charter are: to discover, procure and preserve everything that relates to the History, Antiquities, and Statistics of Minnesota, the Northwest, and generally of America; to rescue from oblivion the memory of its early pioneers, and to obtain and preserve narratives of their exploits, perils, and hardy adventures; to preserve memorials of its Indian tribes, their customs, religion and history; and to publish, from time to time, the result of their efforts in collecting historical information concerning Minnesota.

Its Progress.—In the early days of the Territory, owing to its want of means, the sparse population and their poverty, and the infancy of the commonwealth generally, it accomplished but little beyond collecting some information regarding the early history of this region and printing the same in several pamphlet volumes. In 1864, it had only 840 volumes in its Library. It was then reorganized, and with the aid of a small annual appropriation from the State, since enlarged, has been able to make very gratifying progress.

Its Present Condition.—It now has comfortable apartments in the State Capitol, an income of about \$2,000 per annum, granted partly by the State and partly the gift of members, a Library of over 4,000 volumes and 7,300 pamphlets, with a fine Cabinet or Museum, and a few historical portraits and pictures, etc., a small Endowment Fund raised by Life Membership, and two lots, eligibly situated, on which we design, at no distant day, to erect a fire-proof building.

The Library.—Now contains over 11,000 separate publications, and is rapidly increasing. The works are all useful and appropriate in such a collection, most of them being choice, rare and valuable. On Minnesota history it contains every known work bearing directly or indirectly on that subject, the only complete collection of that kind in existence. [See "*Bibliography of Minnesota*," Vol. 3, Part 1, of our published Collections.] On the history of the Northwest, and West generally, it contains several hundred choice works, many of them very rare and difficult of procurement, laboriously collected by years of search. On general American history its collection directly embraces some 1,000 volumes, (though probably 90 per cent. of our whole Library relates to America.) In Genealogy and Biography, in Statistical and Geographical Works, Publications of Societies and Book Clubs, works relating to our Indian Tribes, Bibliography, Periodicals, Early Travels and Voyages in America, and in General Literature, it has good departments. A valuable set of the publications of the British Record Commission, or Rolls Office, 220 volumes, was received last year, and of the archival works, State papers and documents, and other publications of our own Government, we have all issued from 1849, to and including the present Congress. Of

Minnesota Newspapers.—We have an almost complete set from the first paper ever printed in the Territory to the present date, numbering 200 bound and 300 unbound files. This collection is unrivalled in its completeness, and must always be, while we now receive and preserve every Journal published in the State. We have also nearly 300 Maps, containing nearly every one relating to the State and West generally; a large collection of MSS, many of which we hope to print, Engravings, Portraits, &c. Our Library is in charge of an experienced and careful Librarian, is open daily, and accessible for purposes of study and investigation to any citizen, the books, however, not being removed from the room.

Cabinet.—Our Cabinet contains a number of historical curiosities, relics of the various wars of the country, a number of Coins, specimens of ancient Paper Money, etc. The most valuable part of it, however, is an Ethnological and Archaeological Museum, embracing a collection of Weapons, Costumes and Curiosities, illustrative of the Religion, Habits and Customs of the Indian Tribes of this State, and comprises a number of

unique relics; also, a number of stone axes, spears, arrow-heads, pieces of pottery, etc., remains of the aboriginal "mound-builders," or pre-historic races. This collection is becoming large and valuable.

Publications.—The Society has collected many valuable and interesting facts relating to the history of the State, and issued the same in two volumes, and a portion of the third. These volumes can be had by purchase, or in exchange for works of an equivalent value. The issue of a "part" (about 150 pages) will probably be continued annually hereafter.

Exchanges.—We solicit from other Societies, and from all bodies or institutions which issue reports or works, an exchange of publications. In addition to our own publications, and a number of copies of our State documents which are granted to us for exchanges, we have a collection of other works of value relating to the State, while almost any of the works mentioned in our Bibliography of Minnesota (except the oldest and rarest), can be sent in exchange to those wishing them.

Endowment Fund.—We are making an effort to establish, by the sale of Life Memberships, at \$25 each, a *Permanent Fund*, the interest only of which shall be used for the increase of the Library by purchase and binding. A small sum has been secured already. Gifts and bequests of money for its increase are solicited.

Present Resources.—The average income of the Society for three years past, has been about \$1,500 per annum. It is easy to see that after paying our Secretary and Librarian, whose entire time is occupied by his duties, and the necessary expenses of postage, freight, printing, stationery and other incidental outlays, but little or nothing is left for the purchase or binding of books. Our membership is small, and the community (as is the case in all new States) not wealthy, so that after taxing all our "home resources," we are still without the means we should have for the proper increase of our Library, or the carrying out of our other objects.

We are therefore prompted to appeal for aid to the citizens of our State, who should feel a pride in the success of an institution manifestly so useful and creditable to them—as well as to the generous patrons of public libraries and other public institutions, and to the friends of learning and historical research everywhere, for contributions to our Library, or such other aid as they may prefer to extend.

Donations Especially Desired.—Books and Pamphlets on American History, Biography and Genealogy, particularly those relating to the West; Works on our Indian Tribes, and American Archaeology and Ethnology; Statistical and Scientific Publications of States or Societies; Books or Pamphlets relating to the Great Rebellion; privately printed works; Newspapers; Maps and Charts; Engravings; Autographs; Coins; Antiquities; and Encyclopedias, Dictionaries and Bibliographical works of every kind. Entire sets of works are especially solicited, or collections of books on any subject, but single volumes, or pamphlets even, will be gratefully received.

Works Relating to Minnesota.—Especially do we desire everything relating to our own State:

1. Travels and Explorations; City Directories; Copies of the earlier Laws and Journals of our Legislature; Ordinances of Cities; and, in short, every book, on any subject, printed in the State, or elsewhere, relating to it.



2. Pamphlets of all kinds; Catalogues of Minnesota Learning; Annual Reports of Societies; Sermons State; Minutes of Church Conventions, Synods, or other Ecclesiastical Bodies of Minnesota; Political Addresses; Railroad and Board of Trade Reports; and every other Pamphlet relating to this State.
3. Files of Minnesota Newspapers and Magazines, especially complete volumes of past years, or single numbers even. Publishers are earnestly requested to contribute their publications regularly, all of which will be carefully preserved and bound.
4. Materials for Minnesota History: Old Letters, Journals, and Manuscript Narratives of the Pioneers of Minnesota; Original Papers on the Early History and Settlement of the Territory; Adventures and Conflicts during the Indian War or the late Rebellion; Biographies of the Pioneers of every County, either living or deceased, together with their portraits and autographs; a sketch of the settlement of every town and village in the State, with names of the first settlers. We solicit articles on every subject connected with Minnesota history.
5. Maps of Town Sites or Counties, of any date; Views and Engravings of buildings or historic places; Drawings or Photographs of Scenery; Paintings; Portraits, &c., connected with Minnesota history.
6. Curiosities of all kinds for our Museum; Coins; Medals; Paintings; Portraits; Engravings; Statues; War Relics; Autograph Letters of distinguished persons, etc.
7. Facts illustrative of our Indian Tribes; their History, Characteristics, Religion, &c.; Sketches of their prominent Chiefs, Orators, and Warriors, together with contributions of Indian Weapons, Costumes, Ornaments, Curiosities and Implements. Also, Stone Axes, Spears, Arrow-Heads, Pottery, or other relics of the pre-historic races.

In brief, *everything* that, by the most liberal construction, can illustrate the History of Minnesota; its early settlement; its progress or present condition, which will be of value or interest to succeeding generations.

The Value of Timely Aid.—The Society is now firmly established, and in a condition where a little aid will produce gratifying results, and insure the most enlarged future success and usefulness of the Society for all time. Our Library is at present the most valuable in the State, and will soon be the largest. All works presented to it will be well cared for, and remain forever for the use of the public of the State.

We hope then that a generous and prompt response will be made by those receiving this circular. Communications or Donations may be addressed "Historical Society, St. Paul, Minn." All persons sending us gifts will be placed on our exchange list and receive the publications of the Society in return.

☞ Packages for this Society, too large to send by mail, may be left with the following persons, who will forward them to us without expense to the donors. Such packages should be carefully wrapped and directed to us, and it will be well also to send by mail a list of the same, so that they can be properly credited.

DEPOSITARIES.

NEW YORK,	J. W. Prince, 319 Broadway.
BOSTON,	Dr. Samuel A. Green, Mass. Hist. Society's Rooms.
CINCINNATI,	Robert Clarke & Co., 65 W. Fourth St.
ALBANY,	Joel Munsell, 82 State St.
CHICAGO,	E. M. Haines, 80 La Salle St.
LONDON,	C. D. Cazenove, 15 Beaufort Buildings, Strand.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



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